



## TRC Newsletter April-July 2011

Hectic times at the TRC! Early in May we hope to open an exhibition on Dutch lace caps in the National Gallery, Amman, Jordan (see below). Preparations are on-going and by the end of April the boxes with the garments and other accessories will be taken to the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which will take care of their transport to Jordan.

We have also just opened a new exhibition at the TRC Gallery, namely one on the very attractive *Cheongsam* dresses (see below). This charming garment used to be very popular in China in the mid-twentieth century, then more or less disappeared, but are now being reintroduced by the large fashion houses, both in China and the West.

Discussions are also ongoing with Berg Publishers, Oxford, about the publication of various large and prestigious series of books, on, for example, textiles in general and another about embroidery. The TRC project on embroidery in the Arab world will be included in this series.

By the end of April, the TRC Gallery will also be setting up a small display about a type of garment that was created by Dutch women just after the Second World War. This is the so-called "Feestrok". It was made by sewing lots of colourful pieces of cloth together onto an old skirt, thus symbolising the re-emergence of The Netherlands after a bleak period. The small display will be on show on the Queen's Birthday (30<sup>th</sup> April) and Liberation Day (5<sup>th</sup> May).

The TRC is also preparing for the next Gallery exhibition, which will be about handspinning. This is going to be an interactive exhibition with tools and materials from all over the world, both modern and ancient. Visitors will be invited to try out various techniques of handspinning (spindle and wheel). This exhibition, or better, this spinning experience, will open on the 22<sup>nd</sup> August. And when this exhibition is closed down, the TRC Gallery will be used for a more traditional exhibition, but on a very intriguing subject, namely clothing from the Netherlands, Jordan and Palestine!

On Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> June, the TRC is organising a workshop by Mrs. Ien Rappoldt on Chinese, and particularly Miao, embroidery. Participants are asked to actively participate! Those who are interested are requested to register before the 5<sup>th</sup> June. Costs are 55 euros, including written instructions and all the necessary materials.

## **Cheongsam!** **(28<sup>th</sup> March - 17<sup>th</sup> August 2011)**

The latest TRC exhibition is called *Cheongsam!* It is about a dress form for women that developed in China in the 1920s. It was first popular in Shanghai, where it became fashionable for elite women and then spread throughout the China and other parts of the world thanks to the Chinese diaspora. Its peak of popularity was in the 1950s and 1960s. During the 1970s the wearing of the *cheongsam* was more or less banned in China and replaced by the ubiquitous, blue Mao suit. The *cheongsam* has recently made a revival both in China and the West due to the changing economic situation of China over the last decades. The exhibition includes historical examples of embroidered, printed and woven *cheongsam* as well as the latest fashions from Shanghai.

This exhibition is being staged with the very active support of Pepin Press, Amsterdam and members of the Leiden Chinese community.

The exhibition opened on the 28<sup>th</sup> March 2011 and will run until the 17<sup>th</sup> August.



## **Handspinning exhibition at the TRC**

The exhibition after *Cheongsam* is about handspinning, using both spindles and whorls, as well as spindle and spinning wheels, from throughout the world. It will emphasise the spinning equipment used for cotton, linen, silk and wool, but other fibres, such as ramie, alpaca, rabbit, soya and maize will also be on display. It is going to be a very interactive exhibition, constantly challenging the visitors to try out some handspinning themselves.

The exhibition is being organised by two TRC (archaeology) students. The exhibition will open on the 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2010 and run until the beginning of November. Guided tours, the chance to try various forms of hand spinning, plus actual lessons in handspinning using wool, flax and cotton will be on offer.

Donations for this exhibition have already started to come in, including various hand spindles and carved flax sticks. The organisers of this exhibition are looking for more items for this exhibition and would be pleased to hear of fibre preparation and spinning equipment that people are kindly prepared to give for the exhibition.

## **TRC exhibition goes to Jordan**

Part of the TRC's Dutch lace cap collection will be on display in the National Gallery of Fine Arts, Amman, from the 11<sup>th</sup> May until the 8<sup>th</sup> June. The event forms part of the Holland Festival that is being organised by the Dutch Embassy. The TRC lace caps will be on display together with Jordanian and Palestinian embroidered headgear from the famous Widad Kawar collection. The complete exhibition will include nine fully dressed figures, and at least thirty lace and embroidered caps, showing a stunning contrast between the white lace caps and gold jewellery (replicas!) from Holland, and the multicoloured caps and silver jewellery from Jordan and Palestine.

Part of this TRC exhibition was on show in the Leiden city hall in 2007; since then, the collection of Dutch traditional dress has increased significantly, and is now a valuable resource for students and others who are interested in this field of Dutch cultural history.

In the autumn 2011 we hope to stage a larger version of this exhibition at the TRC Gallery in Leiden.

## **TRC Mini-Publications**

The TRC is regularly asked for copies of the information on its exhibition text boards. So a mini-publication series has been started. The titles currently available are *Cheongsam; Thob` Ubb; Mooi Gekleed Afghanistan; Oya: Turkish kant* and *Prins voor een dag* (all in Dutch). These booklets are now available in the TRC shop, but not yet via the website shop. Other titles due shortly are *Badla; Circumcision clothing* and *Kangas from East Africa*.

## **Encyclopedia of Arab World Embroidery**

The TRC project about embroidery from the Arab World has taken on another life! The TRC is currently working on an in-depth study of embroidery from the Arab World, which will literally be of encyclopaedic dimensions. More details about this project will be given in the next TRC newsletter. In the meantime, however, the TRC

is looking for samples of embroidery from throughout the Arab world, which can be used as examples and photographs in the encyclopaedia.

## **Afghan festival**

A *Nauruz* or New Year festival was held at the TRC on Sunday, 13<sup>th</sup> March 2011. It was organized by the *Stichting Afghan Huis*, Leiden. The *Afghan Huis* provided a wide range of Afghan drinks and snacks as well as organised events such as henna painting and guided tours. Dr. Willem Vogelsang also gave (four times!) a presentation about nineteenth century Afghanistan through the 'eyes' of prints and photographs. The festival was attended by over 85 people, including both 'old' and 'new' Dutch (of Afghan origin).

## **Friends of the TRC**

In order to make sure that all the activities of the TRC can take place we do need your support. Donations can be made over to the TRC ING bank account 2982359

Please remember, the TRC is an officially registered ANBI (Algemeen Nut Beogende Instelling), so all financial donations are deductible for Dutch tax payers.

This also means it is also possible for Dutch tax payers to make a fixed annual donation for a period of 5 years. These can be deducted at a higher rate than a normal donation. Please consult either the TRC or your *notaris* for further details.

## **TRC shop**

The Textile Research Centre also wants to stimulate people to discover the World of Dress at home. The TRC therefore is gradually expanding its shop and its range of products. You can buy new and second-hand books on textiles and dress, including Dutch regional dress, but also craft items from all over the world. These include woven Syrian sheep bands, little Mongolian purses, embroidered Turkish lavender bags with oya decoration, gaudily decorated caps from Afghanistan, and many other beautiful and interesting objects.

The shop also sells collection care items, including acid free paper and boxes for storing your delicate textiles and articles of dress, rolls for more compact storage of long textile items, heads and wigs for display purposes, etc. The TRC also sells a

range of tools, materials and threads for cotton spinning, crochet, embroidery, hairpin lace production, and silk cocoons for making silk paper.

A new line in this assortment is a wide range of beads for making or restoring Dutch regional dress items, including imitation garnets, blood coral and jet, plus all sorts of metal and glass seed beads for embroidery. You can find all these items in the TRC shop for very reasonable prices. You are very welcome to visit the TRC shop at our premises along the Hogewoerd, but you can also visit the shop at home, via our website. It is very easy to order books or other objects digitally. We hope you will enjoy it.

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